

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The newspaper/broadcast

cross-ownership cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

Chairman Powell's arguments to loosen the FCC rules regarding ownership are faulty and should not be regarded as anything other than an attack upon democratic diversity of voices in the media.

It doesn't take much to punch holes in Mr. Powell's arguments: 1) More channels doesn't mean more diversity. The new cable channels are owned by only a few media corporations. There may be more channels, but we keep seeing the same old stuff.

2) Diversity, which the FCC is ordered to protect, is a victim if we judge the success of media by its getting bigger audiences. Inevitably, a bigger audience means a narrowing of the views because one has to appeal to the biggest common denominator.

Smaller constituencies, where diversity lies, are pushed ever more to the margins, eventually smothered by the mass of a bigger, centrist audience. More people does not mean greater diversity. This is clearly a problem of the tyranny of the majority, an evil which a true democracy must always avoid. Diversity means that the FCC must protect smaller groups whose needs can be stifled by the desire for more profit.